

## **RACQUET CLUB ESTATES NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION**

Monthly Meeting – August 14, 2010.

### **Minutes Recorded by Ron Oliver.**

BOA President RICK VILA called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., at the absolute gem of a home owned by BOA member JOSEPH MAY and his gracious husband GENE GRAHAM, both of whom were in attendance and supplied delightful snacks, only some of which ended up going directly to Your Reporter's hips.

Also in attendance were BOA members DEAN NICASTRO, BARBARA MACCARILLO, ROBERT PERRY, LAUREN SCARBRO, BOB MERLISS, RAY TRIM, DONNA CHABAN, SCOTT KENNEDY and your faithful Boswell, RON OLIVER.

Other RCENO members and guests (this is not a complete list and I promise to start getting roll calls at our next meeting!) included KEN LYON, DENNIS VASQUEZ, and a lovely woman who told everyone she was Lauren Scarbro's mom but was obviously her sister. (We don't know why she was fibbing, but it may have something to do with the Witness Relocation Program so we left it alone. )

Rick commented on how impressed he was at the large turnout of BOA members, smack dab in the middle of summer. This speaks to the dedication of the RCENO Board and, possibly, the high price of airfare this summer. None of us have been able to escape.

Lauren motioned to approve the minutes of the May meeting; motion passed unanimously.

Dean NiCastro gave the RCENO financial report, with the very good news that our bank account currently contains \$15,329.38 (FIFTEEN THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED TWENTY NINE DOLLARS AND THIRTY EIGHT CENTS).

Joseph and Robert reported on the progress being made with our proposed charitable donation to the Vista Del Monte Elementary School, located in the RCE neighborhood. School supplies and other incidentals will be purchased and granted to the students and teachers and, quite delightfully in Your Reporter's humble opinion, money will be supplied to help buy BICYCLES as incentive gifts to be given to those students with perfect attendance records.

Joseph and Robert will arrange with PRINCIPAL SCUDDER to donate the "gift" from the RCENO at a formal presentation to which the news media will be invited; it's all fine and good for a tree to fall silently in the forest, but these days charity requires a bit of good press at the very least!

A few ideas for more fund raising possibilities were tossed around: a "period" dinner dance, perhaps in conjunction with the upcoming Alexander Weekend (more details later); selling flasks with the RCENO logo (Your Reporter encouraged this idea) and other clever thoughts were exchanged. We shall see which ones stick.

Donna Chaban reported on PSNIC (Palm Springs Neighborhood Involvement Committee) meetings and news releases:

- The City is offering rebates for energy efficient appliances, including the Edison rebate; (this led to an interesting announcement from Robert Perry regarding toilet replacement and a \$100.00 credit given to persons buying a new low flush toilet at Lowe's...certainly better than flushing a C note down the john, as it were...)
- Pet Adoption Fees are being waived for the month of August.

- The grassroots Christmas In July program, started by local businesses to support the “Parade of Lights” festival was an astonishing success, raising over \$22,000.00 – double the estimates.
- The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation will be holding the Tenth Anniversary of the Great Alexander Weekend, an event honoring the Alexander Homes (of which the RCE neighborhood is almost exclusively comprised) March 25-27.
- The annual PSNIC Picnic will take place either Apr. 30 or May 7<sup>th</sup>, details to come, BUT either way is being moved to Sunrise Park due to its having better facilities than its old location at Ruth Hardy Park;
- Safety Certificate Training Programs starting up again in October; check with the city website at PSPF.com for details;
- Neighborhood Crime Prevention Programs have been ceased due to lack of city budget;
- Volunteers are needed at the Police Department; data entry, front office, etc. Contact Police Department for info.

We thank Donna for her enthusiastic reporting and attention to detail at these PSNIC events; a great deal of very useful information indeed!

Dean NiCastro (who, in his work as a security and alarm specialist here in the Coachella Valley is in an excellent position to know about these things) reported that crime rates are down throughout the City of Palm Springs; he will continue to monitor trends in crime prevention and crimes themselves and report to the Board any further suggestions he may have in regards to safety and prevention. (We thank Dean for his contribution and wonder if perhaps he has a Crime Fighting Superhero costume hidden beneath that AlarmPros work shirt? )

There have been several requests for recommendations from neighbors regarding home repairs and services; Joseph and Robert suggested putting a Vendor List on our RCENO website with reviews and recommendations from users. This was met with enthusiasm from all, although Ken Lyon wisely suggested dating the various vendor “uses” in order to keep tabs on quality. Your Reporter suggested that dating all those vendors would be time consuming not to mention very difficult, especially since most of us are in some kind of relationship already, but he explained he didn’t mean actually “dating” as in “...take them to the Senior Prom.”

Your Reporter clearly needs to pay more attention to the nuance of the conversation.

It was then discussed that we link our website to a “YELP” page on the internet with relevant topics. Scott Kennedy suggested if we negotiated together as a neighborhood we could perhaps get better “group rates” on things like tree trimming from certain vendors.

Donna Chaban mentioned that she is still working on her long-gestating “Dog Run” project for Victoria Park. She will keep us posted.

Scott and Donna brought us up to date on the RCENO T-shirt design; various suggestions were heard, a few changes were made, and a design was finally approved. Further news to follow.

Discussion of the annual RCENO Picnic – to be held Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in Victoria Park – commenced. Lauren Scarbro suggested it would not take the allotted 30 minutes unless we planned to argue about it. Most of us took this as a hint and meekly decided to go along with Lauren; no picnic is worth losing a limb.

Food was discussed, potluck style; BOA members and volunteers will show up early to claim a spot at the park; Scott showed the announcement flyer, it was of course wonderful and is attached herewith -

**RACQUET CLUB *Estates*** NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

*We'll see you there!!*

**It's our...  
Third Annual  
Picnic & General Meeting  
Saturday, October 16, 2010  
at Victoria Park**

Meeting: 10 a.m. 'til 11 a.m.  
Picnic: 11 a.m. 'til 2 p.m.

Picnic Favorites we'll bring along....

- \*Delicious southern-fried Chicken
- \*Aunt Lauren's slo-kooked Baked Beans
- \*Aunt Lauren's heavenly Macaroni Salad
- \*Cousin Betty's aloha Fruit Salad
- \*Fluffy Rolls
- \*Chocolate Perfection Cake
- \*Full selection of beverages

--should you care to bring a "potluck" dish to share, please feel free

Questions: Call Scott, FAirview7-6747  
Check us out: [racquetclubestates.com](http://racquetclubestates.com)  
\*\* Updated Racquet Club T-Shirts available!

A lively discussion ensued regarding the dissemination of these flyers; it turns out that our previous “mailbox stuffing” was in fact a federal offense and given the rather unsavory pasts of some of our BOA membership it was deemed to be not in our best interest to expose them to any further criminal temptations.

Thus, a mass mailing has been planned, and \$250.0 was allocated from our RCENO bank account funds for same.

Raffle items for the picnic were discussed. Donations are welcome.

And thus ended the picnic conversation. No blood was spilled.

Rick Vila mentioned the annual RCENO Home Tour and it was agreed that the item be kept on the agenda for a future meeting. Your Reporter plans a future email blast asking the membership to consider opening their homes for the tour; we shall see what happens.

In New Business, Your Reporter volunteered that he had been lazy in not getting out of the pool long enough to create a FACEBOOK page for our RCENO.

(Your Reporter is delighted to announce he has corrected this problem and invites you all to go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and type “Racquet Club Estates Neighborhood Organization” into the Search box.)

Dean NiCastro will liase with the local Fire House and see what needs to be done to paint same as part of our neighborhood outreach and beautification.

Ken Lyon asked about Code Enforcement issues in the neighborhood; Scott felt things had been moving forward in several of the cases and will get an update on outstanding problems in time for the next meeting.

More conversation ensued regarding our oft-discussed “Scholarship” plan to give financial aid to homeowners in order to enhance the curb appeal of their properties; paint, renovations, landscape, etc. A tricky business, it is agreed, and Barbara Maccarillo plans to investigate a “grant process”, while Lauren suggested teaming up with existing programs to help.

Joseph May will investigate the proposed (by RCENO) placing of an all-weather Community Bulletin Board in Victoria Park; Lauren will investigate costs associated with same.

Future meeting locations were discussed: September will be hosted by Ken and Rick; October will be the Park Picnic; and in November BOA member Ray Trim will graciously open his home to us all.

There was discussion of a possible Christmas BOA get together at Your Reporter's home, sometime in mid-December. Your Reporter has not, as of this writing, discussed this with His Sainted Boyfriend The Lightbulb Guy and plans to wait until Said Boyfriend has had a few Palm Springs Iced Teas (also known as a John Daley – a Sweet Tea Vodka and Lemonade version of the famous Arnold Palmer) before suggesting it. News to follow.

Scott Kennedy handed out some very interesting photos of the RCE during its infancy, and discussed his interest in getting Historic Site Designation for our neighborhood.

Your Reporter suggested that given the age demographic of Palm Springs, many of our residents may qualify as Historic Sites themselves.

Rick Vila moved to adjourn; Dean NiCastro seconded, it was unanimous and the meeting closed at 11:55 am.

Another perfect day beckoned us all and off we went to enjoy the beauty of our sunny Palm Springs...